THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.M. SAYEED): (a) to (c) The Government of India accorded investment approval in March, 2003 for implementation of the project of "Establishment of Backbone Telecom Network" by Power grid Corporation of India Ltd. (PGCIL) at an estimated cost of Rs. 934.23 crore with assistance from the World Bank. The project envisages entry of PGCIL into Telecom Communication Sector as infrastructure provider by leasing end-to-end bandwidth. The power transmission lines owned by PGCIL provide excellent connectivity throughout the country. The project envisages to exploit the huge transmission infrastructure and utilization of spare fibre capacity of Unified Load Despath and Communication (ULDC) projects telecom business. The Telecom Backbone Network being developed by PGCIL will connect all metros and major towns/cities in the country.

(d) The project of Establishment of Backbone Telecom Network is still under implementation by PGCIL. However, the telecom links already established are under commercial operation and services are being provided by PGCIL to various customers like International Long Distance Operators, National Long distance Operators, Cellular Operator, Basic Service Providers, Internet Service Providers, etc.

(e) Although power transmission is the core business of PGCIL, the diversification into telecom would enable the Corporation to utilize their infrastructure effectively. Additional resources generated through the diversification into telecom business would be ploughed back into transmission business to augment the much needed resources to establish National Grid and would facilitate availability of power at cheaper rates to the consumer.

Power generation during Tenth Plan

842. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tenth Plan target of 41,000 MW will be achieved by Government;

(b) to what extent the private sector will contribute to the target of 41000 MW for the Tenth Plan;

(c) whether Government propose to revise the target downwards for the Government sector;

(d) if so, what are the bottlenecks which might lead to reducing the target of 41000 MW for the Tenth Plan; and

(e) the Plans by Government to drawn up alternate strategies for power sufficiency by the end of the Tenth Plan?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.M. SAYEED): (a) Government is making all efforts to achieve the Tenth Plan target of 41,000 MW.

(b) In the target of 41,000 MW, the Private Sector contribution is 7121 MW (17.3%).

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) In addition to the benefits from new generating capacity, the power supply position is expected to further improve through:

- An additional capacity of 300 MW is expected to come from renewable sources of energy. In addition, supply of 1000 MW from Tala Hydroelectric Project in Bhutan is expected in the 10th Plan.
- Undertaking energy conservation measures for which the Energy Conservation Act has been enacted and the Bureau of Energy Efficiency constituted.
- Reducing technical losses in distribution. The Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme (APDRP) is designed for the attainment of this objective.
- Undertaking Renovation and Modernization (R&M) of existing power stations which combined with improved Operation and Maintenance practices would lead to higher availability and generation.
- Export of power from surplus to deficit region through the gradual development of a National Grid to optimize utilization of generating capacity on an all India basis.
- Installation of captive generating plants. The new Electricity Bill provides for a liberal framework for construction of captive power plants freely.

Difference between power production cost and selling price

†843. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a great difference between the cost

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.